

**MINUTE ENTRY
ROBERT G. JAMES
U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE
SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA
ALEXANDRIA DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Plaintiff

VERSUS

**CATAHOULA PARISH SCHOOL
BOARD, et al.,**
Defendants

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CIVIL ACTION NO. 69-14430

JUDGE ROBERT G. JAMES

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A status conference in the above-referenced matter was held September 18, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. Present were Colleen Phillips and Jennifer Fasulo, counsel for United States Department of Justice (“DOJ”); Robert Hammonds, John Blanchard, and Pamela Dill, counsel for Catahoula Parish School Board (“School Board”); Louis Scott and Jessica Rabinowitz, representing the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP.

First, the Court addressed a letter received from Jill Lossin Smith regarding the denial of a medical transfer for her child. The Court considers the letter an appeal of that decision. The letter will be filed in the record under seal to protect the identity of the minor. The Court instructed the School Board to file a response to the letter no later than October 9, 2019. The Court will then consider the letter and response on the record.

Second, the Court asked Ms. Rabinowitz for a report as to the NAACP's involvement as amicus. Ms. Rabinowitz reported that a representative was only able to tour two of the four schools, but was able to see Block High School. A discussion then ensued on the NAACP's motion for relief. The Court informed all counsel that it intends to reconsider the nature of the amicus involvement in the lawsuit. While the School Board did not agree to provide documents to the NAACP, there was no objection to a meeting between Ms. Phillips of the DOJ and Ms. Rabinowitz to discuss Ms. Phillips' assessment of the *Green* factors as they apply in this case. During a break, counsel were able to meet and intend to meet again in person or by telephone conference, so that counsel for the School Board may also participate. If after counsel have met or conferenced, the NAACP needs additional relief, Ms. Rabinowitz will file a supplemental memorandum no later than October 9, 2019.

Additionally, the School Board and the DOJ reported that they were working towards a final assessment of the *Green* factors. Ms. Phillips has asked for preliminary data, but will be receiving final data after October 1, 2019. In light of the information provided during this status conference, the parties are not required to file the status report currently due on October 1, 2019. The School Board will file its annual report on October 15, 2019.

Finally, Ms. Phillips stated that she is willing to conduct a community meeting in Catahoula Parish to discuss the factors with community members. The parties and the NAACP will explore this option.

The Conference concluded at 3:15 p.m.

RGJ

